

**Job Corps Region II
Vocational Taskforce Meeting Minutes
12/14/04 – 12/15/04
Baltimore, MD**

Introduction

Review Minutes from August 23-24

National Office Update

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- The National Office is focusing on the industries outlined in the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative and comparing Job Corps' current training programs to those industries.
- The 12 industries identified by the initiative are: advanced manufacturing, automotive, biotechnology, construction, energy, finance, geospatial, health care, hospitality, information technology, retail and transportation.
- The ETA is building a demand-driven workforce development system to meet employers' needs.
- The Business Relations Group (BRG) was created by the ETA to reach out to businesses to learn about their challenges and to meet the demands of employers.
- The National Office is exploring all of the opportunities that are available to students with assistance from national vocational support contractor McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy (MJLM).
- The National Office will soon create a National Vocational Advisory Committee to research industry certification requirements.
- The committee will be tasked with exploring available certifications, prioritizing the best opportunities for students, estimating resources necessary and making recommendations to the National Office for implementation.
- The focus of the committee will be to determine how Job Corps students will find the best jobs available in the competitive workplace.
- MJLM is researching what certifying associations and organizations Job Corps centers are currently using.
- The Vocational Training Report Card (VTRC) runs a month behind, and updates won't show up for one to two months due to the progress of the data center.
- Changes to the VTRC have been slow. The National Office is working with the data center to improve the report and make sure the system works better.
- The ETA is writing Job Corps into grants in high-growth industries that identify how to train, certify staff and provide opportunities for professional development.
- Automotive grants were given to Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES), Shoreline Community College and Gateway Technical College.
- Additional grants have been awarded in the health care industry. Management and Training Corporation's nursing program at pilot centers is such a grant.

- The National Office Division is divided into academic and vocational areas and is focusing on these training efforts.
- Job Corps will focus its training efforts where it makes sense.

National Vocational Support Contractor

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- McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy (MJLM) will assist the National Office in improving the vocational training skills standards and the Training Achievement Records (TARs)
- MJLM has four major tasks:
 - Reviewing vocational activities/programs – what vocational areas should Job Corps be moving into, use national, local LMI information
 - Updating TARs, skills standards – focus on certification, creation of vocational advisory committee
 - Vocational analysis – correct evaluation factors on the VTRC, analyze whether additional reports are necessary
 - Vocational change process – create a systematic approach to change process, look at policy and direction for both, identify possible issues, e.g. funding
- The TARs have been converted to Word and PDF documents and are posted on the www.jccdr.org Web site.
- The National Office is exploring whether an emphasis should be placed on long-term stay at the national level.
- Some A-level TARs have been expanded. Some A-level TARs are not enough.
- Some Job Training Matches (JTM)s are a catch-all. The National Office is looking at improving this.
- Certification – should a competency test be mandatory at the end of training?
 - The CNA trade, one of the strongest Job Corps offers, requires a state certification test.
- The National Office is considering making some changes to the data center reports due to serious time delay.
- MJLM is surveying centers to learn what certifications are currently used for students, staff and programs.
- MJLM is not initially focusing on placement statistics.
- One issue MJLM will address: students who attended a Job Corps center in a state other than their home state. Some trades offer reciprocity at Chicago JCC – how can this be replicated?

- There may be some overlap due to similar state requirements.
- Job Corps has tiers of training programs – the certifications selected need to range in spectrum for all learning levels.
- There are some industry certifications that recognize the issue. Some organizations are creating student-level certifications.
- Job Corps needs to determine whether to attempt to certify students while they're enrolled in the program or to initiate an interest in lifelong learning, working with local community colleges.
- Is it possible for Job Corps to interest curriculum developers to create programs for Job Corps?
- Should additional work-based learning be required for students who aren't ready to leave Job Corps?
- MJLM is surveying centers to see what certifications are currently offered or are being pursued (including instructor certifications).
- MJLM's objective as the vocational support contractor is to provide Job Corps with essential vocational support services.
- The goals are to: 1) Take advantage of high-growth, high-demand job opportunities; 2) Realign vocational training program with industry standards and certification requirements; 3) Utilize vocational reporting and improvement system; 4) Develop and improve vocational support tools.
- Decision Information Resources (DIR) will assist MJLM with information gathering, research and evaluation, VRIS tools and support projects.
- MJLM will visit centers throughout the country to explore certification options, seeking feedback, and identifying issues – e.g., placing students.
- Approach for identifying certifications – should be national in scope, based on inclusive process and student-focused.
- Certification should be culmination of process for alignment of program.
- MLJM has identified 200-plus possible certifications that are related to Job Corps training programs.
- 59 various industry associations offer the certifications above.
- MLJM will assist Job Corps in developing a certification assessment instrument to guide the selection of appropriate certifications that fit Job Corps.
- MLJM and the advisory committee will consider a variety of issues during the certification selection process, e.g. instructor training and certification, program curriculum changes and accreditation, equipment and facility upgrades, increases in student length of stay, etc.
- MJLM, with guidance from the advisory committee, will develop a certification implementation plan based on final certifications approved by the National Office (with input from all levels within the Job Corps community).
- MJLM is conducting a current analysis of the vocational program including market labor information and current staff knowledge of such data, current programs offered, comparing and ranking current training programs, and developing program improvement plans, among others.

Certification and Credentialing Committee Report

John DeBlasio, Director of Vocational Programs, MTC

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- Concern with TARs – Does Job Corps maintain enough credibility in industries?
- TARs can stipulate/define curriculum.
- TARs can lead to credentialing in some cases but in others they are not an industry skills standard or an assessment.
- TAR is a transcript and legal record; it should go along with industry certification.
- TARs should be updated and aligned with industry certifications.
- DeBlasio attended a certification convention held by Association for Career and Technical Education.
 - Session of interest – Skills Exchange with the National Skills Standards Board – topic was “How to choose appropriate certification for training locations.”
 - Reasons to certify – need for levels within certain skills, profit line for industry certification business.
 - The highest priced certifications are often the least accepted.
 - Convention provided insight regarding certification.
 - Who is giving certificates and know why they are – non-profit entities need standards.
 - What are the goals/outcomes of certifying body?
 - Most certification initiatives aren’t top-down programs.
 - What is the organizational buy-in – will it be successful at all levels?
 - CompTIA – non-profit computer training association offering programs in A+ certification, i-Net+, Network+, HTI+ (smart wiring homes).
 - Expensive certification.
 - Learning alliance tests - \$64 vs. \$143.
 - Instructors’ testing – no charge.
 - Exams are taken over the Internet and are multiple-choice, theoretical – they are not evaluating hands-on experience.
 - CompTIA is second only to Microsoft.
 - Organizations testing students may buy testing vouchers.
 - Downfall is that the curriculum is changed every two years and the books are issued by CompTIA and are expensive to replace.
 - Another computer-related certification available is CTech – it is written at the eighth-grade level.
 - National Institute of Metal Working Skills (NIMS) is the best exam for the manufacturing industry because it combines both practical and theoretical skills.
 - The test is practical and theoretical – those taking the test must make parts based on specifications; when they’ve reached specification, they move on to theoretical part of exam.
 - NIMS offers 46 certification programs.

- The manufacturing trades are working through TARs based on NIMS testing.
 - Manufacturing students have a 92 percent placement rate and a 90 percent Job Training Match among the three pilot centers.
 - Within the hospitality industry, the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) is the leading trade organization.
 - AHLA offers dozens of certification options through the Educational Institute of the AHLA (www.ei-ahla.org).
 - The Educational Institute of the AHLA provides educational and testing materials for certification within the industry.
 - Tests are multiple choice exams, are conducted online and are reasonably priced.
 - Certifications include hospitality educator, hospitality administrator and lodging manager.
 - The START program is a certification program created by the AHLA specifically for Job Corps.
 - In this industry, promotions are often based on certifications.
 - There is an entry-level exam and a \$25 fee for credentials.
 - The TAR is supplemented with additional materials.
 - Relocation is an issue with this industry.
 - American Culinary Federation
 - Programs can be accredited even if instructors are not certified.
 - Testing includes a registration fee and self-study.
 - There is a variable fee for accreditation onsite.
 - National Restaurant Association Safe Serve
 - Staff must be certified to teach students.
 - More centers are attaining the certificate.
 - CERTIPORT
 - There is an advantage to developing own service site for Microsoft certification.
 - There is no fee for becoming a testing center, but you must have appropriate equipment.
 - Students are often more comfortable in own testing site.
 - May have to pay for proctors to administer the exams.
- Certification prioritization should begin in trades with the most number of students.
- With Barnes, cost of certifications are different when you're in the middle of a contract versus the beginning of one.
- Items to think about when researching certification:
 - Current systems.
 - Technical load.
 - More students coming in with a greater number of educational challenges.
 - Length of stay – the longer students are in the program, the better success rate they will have, there is a longer timeframe to impact the student.
 - Require communication with students to make sure they understand the importance of staying in the program.

- Instructor skills.
 - Cost.
 - Investing in instructors' education and making them more marketable individuals.
- Issues for the committee to explore:
 - Committee needs clear direction from National Office on how they should proceed at the regional level.
 - Understand the relationship of TARs – how should they be revised with certifications?
 - Share information with/about pilot programs at various centers
 - Partnerships at national level – assistance in building upon those at local level.
 - Funding.
 - Can the National Office create additional academic standards?
- What credentials are the right ones for our students? Where do we go?
- There has to be an evaluation process – how should process be created?
- Students also need employability skills and professional development opportunities.
- Hard skills come easy and are learned quickly.
- Other issues include literacy, drug problems, employability skills, desire
- There is a work group working on employability skills – career success skills.
- The academic training, vocational training and social skills all overlap.
- The Pacific Institute has a few pilot programs to emphasize motivation, setting goals, teamwork, communication, working with others, and relating to each other.
- The National Office is working with support contractor for staff professional development, which will feed into academics.
- The National Director has created a strategic plan and workgroups to address academic, vocational, career, residential and e-learning issues.
- Centers are using some facets of applied academics but not all areas of it.
- Academic instructors are teaching in many trade areas.
- Education is necessary to pass the GED, applied academics are not quite enough.
- Integration is important with all programs.
- CTech program – all curriculum kits must be bought from them, but certification doesn't deliver with placement.
- A number of companies partner with CTech certification for lower-end certification.
- CTech certification should be matched with other trades for optimum success.
- Some six-week certification programs are not long enough for students to learn social skills.
- Every trade should have access to some type of ACT/AT program.
- 80 Job Corps centers currently have partnerships with local community colleges.
- National Office is working with the American Association of Community Colleges.
- Question to address – should certification be a decision of completion? Or should students be able to complete the program with or without certification?

Home Builders Institute: Credentialing Initiative and the HBI TAR Pilot Program

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- The Home Builders Institute is the training arm of the National Association of Home Builders.
- HBI created the Residential Construction Academy (RCA) to teach future home builders critical skills necessary.
- Students receive additional certification from RCA program upon completion.
- HBI created the TAR Pilot Program with Job Corps 18 months ago.
- HBI has received a grant to pilot 20 programs in 11 states.
- Old Dominion is the pilot site in region for electrical, Keystone is the pilot site for carpentry, and a pilot site for plumbing will be coming this summer.
- HBI must demonstrate placement outcomes, and program may expand.
- HBI revised the carpentry TAR first and electrical TAR second to meet residential needs.
- Other TARS include HVAC and plumbing; facilities maintenance will be completed soon.
- The TARs contain textbook page number to refer to instructions for necessary skills.
- HBI partnered with Delmar Publishing to create curriculum materials.
- Information about the materials is available at www.residentialacademy.com.
- Text is written by industry experts.
- Instructors were credentialed last year.
- CD-ROMs include testing for each chapter.
- VHS tapes on safety are provided for every chapter.
- Within the carpentry TAR, students must complete the foundation-level learning basics of program, in addition to a specialty such as drywall installation, cement, framing, interior finishing and trim, etc.
- There are very few construction workers now that a variety of skills because of industry competitiveness.
- The HBI TARs may assist with driving placement because graduates of RCA are placed in national registry upon completion.
- HBI graduates can post resumes on www.homebuilders.org.
- HBI trained staff to use the materials at a conference.
- HBI is working with community colleges to set up partnerships where Job Corps students completing trades can earn college credit and then enroll in community colleges for additional training.
- Most centers are offering more than one specialty, but students are only completing in one area.
- Most “old school” instructors keep students in vocational areas longer to give them additional skill sets when they’re completing.
- Electrical contractors are more interested in electrical students with experience in high voltage and bending conduit rather than network cabling.
- Carpentry contractors are looking for students with a basic knowledge.

- HBI helps instructors to create VST projects.
- To place students in the construction industry, there is a need for strong employability skills.
- Each contractor will tweak students' skills.
- By 2012, there will be 1 million additional jobs in the construction industry.
- Local HBAs must partner with local HBI.
- The best thing to do is meet with local contractors in local HBAs.
- Transportation to job sites is a big issue for student placement.

Credentialing Updates from other National Training Contractors

United Brotherhood of Carpentry, Greg Garfield

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- UBC is credentialing its instructors through distance learning with Penn State.
- There are journeyman upgrade classes in every major city; there are a few in each state.
- The International Training Center in Las Vegas is training instructors, trainers.
- Everyone goes for scaffolding and fall protection.
- UBC instructors meet OSHA standards, and instructors carry cards.
- If instructors complete OSHA 500 class, it enables them to teach OSHA 10/30.
- In some areas, all apprentices and some Job Corps students are enrolling in OSHA 10 classes.
- UBC created program committee to focus on credentialing.
- UBC is working on upgrading the Performance Evaluating Training System.

Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' International Association, Gene Neville

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- OPCMIA created new materials and textbooks.
- OPCMIA are looking into new apprenticeship materials.
- TARs will be revised to fit into apprenticeship materials.
- They offer scaffolding, HILDE and OSHA safety classes on an ongoing basis.

International Union of Operating Engineers, Milton Kendall

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- Many instructors are currently certified.
- At Anaconda and Woodstock, students receive third-class apprenticeship license based on Job Corps training.
- Instructors are currently updating HAZMAT and forklift certification.
- Some are currently certified because of years of experience.
- There are more avenues to update and provide certification.
- Union apprenticeship sites offer free upgrade training.

United Auto Workers Labor Employment and Training Corporation, Dan Hall
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- Each instructor must be Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified.
- Program certified by ASE.
- The National Automotive Teaching Education Foundation has certified Clements for the past nine years and Clearfield for the last 15 years.
- Testing for technicians is only offered twice per year, but since July 2004, they have started offering testing online.
- There is a test site in Evansville, Indiana.
- With the ASE Technician certification, students must satisfy two-year on-the-job training, but up to one year may be waived due to instruction at certified program.
- ASE TARs are aligned with program certifications.

TAR Committee Report

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- Revised TARs for Medical Office Support, Network Cabling and Business Technology went into effect November 1, 2004.
- Revisions are made to ensure students have the skills necessary to get and keep a job.
- Documents are also changing, so students don't see the progress.
- Those responsible for training are responsible for job placement.
- Termination possibility is included in TAR revision.
- Eliminated duplication on Business Technology TAR, combined foundation course and additional levels.
- Feedback from centers:
 - Additional need for employer-specific spaces at the end of TAR.
 - Name should be changed from Office Assistant.
 - PowerPoint not included in TAR.
- Students aren't designated as completers until instructor signs off on completion even though students might have the skills.
- Sometimes short period of completion is student-driven.
- Key is to allow student to leave Job Corps with a number of skills for his or her job.
- With a consolidated group of TARs, there is a length-of-stay issue – there are not enough vocational and employability skills learned.
- A-level completers don't have enough skills.
- The Vocational Assessment Tool is used to review TAR.
- Network cabling includes copper wiring and fiber optics.
- Instructor concern – Student Activity Guides were last updated in 1996.

- The Student Activity Guides somewhat developed curriculum.
- The Computer Service Tech TAR was developed from CompTIA curriculum and is a drastic change from existing TAR.
- The Computer Service Tech and IT TARs will be sent to taskforce for review.
- The IT TAR is still pretty current.
- Plumbing students can receive A-level completion in a short amount of time.
- IT students receive training in A+, software, hardware and networking with completing Level I. The Benchmark certification provides some basic knowledge without A+ certification.
- Certification may be one small skills set, may not be enough for entry-level employees.
- Medical Office Support TAR was taken to local hospitals to make sure students learn necessary skills.
- Instructors should be careful when giving certification; students need competency of skills.
- A system of checks and balances is necessary for vocational instructors to make sure they're not just giving out certifications.
- Within Job Corps' automotive training program, UAW has reviewed quality of training programs due to feedback from automotive industry executives a few years back.
- The National Office assessed the basic automotive programs to strengthen training.
- The National Automotive Teaching Education Foundation's general service technician certification offers certification for basic programs at secondary schools.
- There is a minimum yearlong program for basic training.
- Training centers must have appropriate equipment, tools, certified instructors, and must be ASE-certified in four major areas – air conditioning, engine performance, brakes and electrical.
- Partnerships with local community colleges would provide additional training.
- Certifying instructors would make them very marketable individuals.
- The National Office is moving forward with GST certification but will not require all students to complete entire TAR to be a completer.
- Dan Hall will come up with a TAR for a meaningful automotive foundations course that is completable.
- McNeely Pigott & Fox will assist Dan Hall with distribution of revised TAR.
- There are many factors that drive systems – financial incentives may need to be adjusted so students are interested in staying in program longer.
- The minimum stay at Frenchburg is 210 days, may expand to 240 days.
- TARs should be aligned to grant longer lengths of stay.
- Culinary Arts TAR revision committee will consist of Andrew Smith, chair; Rosie Blount; Michael Danos; and Dana Kelly.
- Committee members will enlist the help of culinary instructors and advanced training partners.
- The content of TAR should be combined so that all students complete at C-level

- Some food service students not qualified enough for advanced training programs.

****The next meeting will be in late March or early April in Baltimore, Md.***